ICMR and the National Academy of Medical Sciences, and then by practitioners of ART and the general public. Guidelines have been examined by the Directorate General of Health Services and are under active consideration of the Ministry. These guidelines make it mandatory to obtain written consent of the couple before starting treatment.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Locust Control

456. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) has recently cautioned India against a possible invasion of locusts from the Pakistani territory in the coming months and asked India and Pakistan to jointly carry out surveys well before the possible onslaught; and

(b) if so, the details of the warnings received and preventive measures taken to deal with the eventuality?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) The FAO has apprised India of a relatively low risk of locust invasion during the latter part of 2005 if ecological conditions in the coastal region of the Red Sea, the Gulf countries, Afghanistan and Pakistan favour successful spring breeding. FAO has suggested that India should continue to monitor the global locust situation and carry out regular surveys in its domestic territory and with Pakistan in the border areas to detect any locust build up.

A contingency plan is in place to deal with any locust eventuality. The contingency plan focuses on regular survey and surveillance in the Scheduled Desert Area in the Western Region of the country for timely detection and control of locusts, maintaining readiness in terms of control measures including pesticides and equipment and exchange of information with neighbouring countries and FAO.